

# ADVICE ABOUT BURGLARS.

## What Would You Do If You Discovered One of the Men Behind the Mask in Your Room?



**W**OULD you shoot if you should wake up some night and find a burglar stealing about your room? Would you shout? Or would you jump up and run? And which "method of procedure" is recommended by the wise men who are called the "criminal authorities," not because they are criminals, but because they are supposed to know all about the "crooks"?

Which of the three plans would you adopt if the enterprising burglar came a-burgling while you were lying in your little bed, trusting in Providence and the irresponsible combination on the front door?

Burglary, in its results, has been so often a life or death question that it would seem to be too grave to trifle with. And yet it is a joke in the operas, a joke in the comic papers, a joke with burglars themselves when they are asked to talk about it, and more or less of a joke with every casual citizen with whom you may brook the question. But it is not a joke with the corner, whose work it has greatly added to within the years that have established the efficacy of the revolver as a weapon of deadly precision. Most burglars who become homicides in the exercise of their "profession" plead that "they didn't mean to," or that they were "acting in self-defense." But it remains a deadly fact that a burglar always carries a loaded revolver to use on you if it is necessary to silence you abruptly. The law always praises you for killing a burglar. It is considered not only your right, but your duty.

A burglarious entrance is, under the law, a simple matter. Make a belated attempt to open your own window from the outside, and if you should be shot dead by a member of your own family, you are only, in the eyes of the law, a deceased burglar.

### Fire First, Inquire Afterward.

The fact of the matter is that the law is on the side of the inmates of a dwelling or the watchers in a locked-up store every time. The law justifies the shooting of a burglar under any circumstances. First fire and inquire afterward. That is a safe rule to go by. And yet, supposing Mr. Burglar should come in by the basement window and prowl up to the bed room and you should be awakened by the rattle of your jewelry and knock-knocks on the dressing table, and sit up in bed—to find yourself covered by a big black revolver—what then?

Professional testimony taken and professional advice given on this important question, which has come to the front again because of recent burglaries in which shooting has been a complex and disagreeable feature) would seem to justify the immediate use of firearms by the person who discovers the intruding thief—if firearms are available and within handy distance.

The burglar expects this. And if he thinks that you will fire he may fire first, although the "regular" members of the burglarious profession deprecate the use of lethal weapons. If you have not a gun handy, take Inspector Cortwright's advice, and "Yell! Scream! Yell!"

Burglars are, as a rule, both by their own confession and the experiences of the police and others, rank cowards. Yell and they will flee. They hate a commotion, because it may lead to their arrest, with a train of disagreeable consequences. Therefore, wouldn't a shout sometimes do as well as a shot?

Burglars as well as police answer that question in the affirmative.

### Burglars Hate Shrieking Women.

"What do burglars hate most while they are exercising their profession?" I asked my old friend, the

Burglar, with a record of a lifetime in prison, with a few burglarizing "holidays" sandwiched thinly between his numerous "stunts done" time.

"They hate most of all a shrieking woman. May the Lord deliver us from the woman who hollers. The average burglar is paralyzed by her. He doesn't exactly know what to do. So he cuts and runs. He doesn't want to shoot. It is against the etiquette of the profession to shoot a screaming female, or any one else, excepting in absolute self-defense.

"Even when men with guns get after you it is not, according to the highest authorities on 'burgling,' good form to shoot. Some burglars do not even go armed. Why should they? They are not murderers. They are only higher-class thieves, having the relation to the rest of the profession that a first-class company promoter has to a common bunco stealer. There is always a risk in going armed, for anybody. I mean just what I say, that burglars are not the only people that incur a disagreeable personal risk from the habit of going armed. An armed man may sometimes shoot the wrong party at the wrong time, and so may an armed burglar.

"Low down sneak thieves, who go into houses and stores by sneaking methods—whence their name—are generally armed, and they generally shoot on a mouse. But these are not real, professional burglars. They are fellows who give the 'profession' a hard name.

"And the newspapers don't ever discriminate. Any old sneak thief who rustles into a house and bungles—not burglars, but bungles—around and alarms the family and gets into a bloody shooting' scrap, is a burglar according to common belief and report, both with the police, who like a high-sounding title for common crooks, just as a man who shoots a stray suckling calf in the backwoods weighs it in for a deer, and with the papers, who get most of their criminal reports from the police. The papers should never forget that the police are not only naturally prejudiced, but they want to make a great horn-blowing and hullabaloo and a record, so they make mammoths out of minnows and swans out of sparrows. Let me put it as simply as I can—and then I'll quit on this head. The butcher boy that reads a dime novel and breaks into his employer's store to steal a leg of beef after hours will carry a gun and will shoot the bulldog or the watchman because he has got the notion out of 'yellow' literature.

### The Genuine Article.

"The genuine article in burglars won't burglarize a cheap joint, in the first place. In the second, he is so well up in the law and in common sense that he knows that burglary is practically a capital offense—if a citizen can shoot fast enough that it used even to be a capital offense by court conviction, and that he'll get the worst of it some time, first or last, if he doesn't run for his life upon discovery. So he runs, and he often gets clear away if he is a dead game sport professional with the experience of a scout and the instinct of a general. If he's a sanguinary out-of-work chump or some kind of an amateur, then he gets chafed that he's such a bungler, and it's this kind of a 'chafed' that shoots and gets shot when he doesn't get hanged or electrified, bringing disgrace upon an honorable profession."

"Don't wait; shoot," is therefore the advice of the professional burglar to all level-headed burglars who are caught burglarizing.

Others say, "Don't wait and don't shoot, but shout."

Some of the professional gentlemen who were asked for advice were reluctant to give it.

"Oh, I don't want to get mixed up with anything like that," said the veteran former chafed, "the Byrnes of New York. 'Let the people at headquarters talk about that. I'm out of it.'"

But as a question of general interest to be answered by you as a citizen with more than usual ex-

perience. Let's put it explicitly. What would you do if you woke up and found a burglar in your room?" "Ha, ha, ho!" roared the veteran burglar trapper. "I know that the idea is ludicrous—but, then, just supposing—"

### Use Common Sense.

"Oh, well, I would use common sense. A man of common sense, which, of course, includes presence of mind, won't make a fool of himself even with a burglar in the room. But a burglar—a real professional burglar—in a bedroom is somewhat uncommon. As long as I stay at home I don't think that I'll ever experience the phenomenon of a burglar in my bedroom. Some greenhorns might come blundering in, but a professional—never!"

"And what would you do with the greenhorn?" "Why, I can only repeat that I would use common sense. I mean just what I say, that burglars are not the only people that incur a disagreeable personal risk from the habit of going armed. A pistol shot may sometimes shoot the wrong party at the wrong time, and so may an armed burglar.

"And—as to others? What would you advise?" "Well, every citizen must deal with his own burglar according to common sense and circumstances. There are citizens and citizens—and burglars and burglars—"

"I have heard on good authority that most burglars are cowards?"

"Cowards? Well, they believe in self-preservation and in avoiding bloodshed where possible. That is to say, that if discovered, and if he is a genuine burglar and not an amateur, a crook will run for his life and liberty, sometimes even leaving his valuable kit of tools behind him. That has been proven repeatedly. Detection in the act is the greatest danger of burglary. It is not logical or reasonable that a burglar should alarm a household and a neighborhood, and attract the attention of police and watchmen by shooting. Therefore, if a householder wants to scare away the burglar, who is always cautious and timorous, shouting will often be as efficacious as shooting, and will have less risk of nasty results. A pistol shot may provoke a repartee in kind—and the man who makes the retort may be a better shot than the other fellow."

### Partridge Says Scream.

Commissioner Partridge of New York, in giving his advice to the citizen who finds his rest disturbed and his home invaded by a burglar, says "Scream."

"I have said it," he replied. "A good doctor doesn't reject his own medicine."

"Just—scream! Is that all you have to say?" "That's enough. And it's enough for any ordinary burglar."

A woman who was asked what she thought of the commissioner's suggestion said: "Sounds well, but it is not practical. When I am alarmed I always utter my voice, and could no more scream than I could fly. I think that any screaming should be done with a pistol, and that every woman should know how to use one. A loaded pistol doesn't lose its voice!"

Deputy Commissioner Piper of New York, in quoting, refers to the law on burglary—the law which incorporates Blackstone's famous saying that every man's house is his castle.

The castle, upon invasion, is therefore to be "defended" by the methods, if necessary.

The immediate use of firearms is justifiable, although Captain Piper does not want to be quoted as a kind of incendiary provoker of oppression in this direction.

But what would you do yourself, captain?" was asked.

"That would depend on the burglar. I certainly wouldn't let any burglar get a head on me. I promise you."

Captain Titus of the detective bureau in New York, in reply to a similar question, said:

"Here is what I would do, as I figure it: I would first of all tell the burglar to get out. Then if he did not get out I would tell him that I would shoot, and I would shoot in a business-like manner."

"To shoot a burglar comes in the penal code under the heading of justifiable homicide. Of course, if you

haven't any gun? Well, then, you must be guided by circumstances. But, whatever you do, don't let the burglar shoot you."

"You do not need to wait until a man is in the room before you shoot. If a man begins to fumble and fuss at the window fastening of your room, and you shoot him, after hailing him, then you have committed justifiable homicide. I remember one case in which a burglar had inserted only his fingers in the inside ledge of the window. Yet he was a burglar to all intents and purposes, and the man whose safety or property, or both, were menaced drew a revolver and fired, with disastrous results to the intending burglar, who had not even effected a complete burglarious entrance, but had just begun."

"The thing to do when you find a burglar in the room is to put him out of action. It is not likely that he will wait, if he sees that your intentions are warlike. But if he should make any kind of a move as if he would draw a gun, or if he has one in his hand, don't give him a chance to figure on what will happen to him if he should shoot you. Shoot first. That's what I would do."

### Two Young Men's Experience.

"That's what common sense suggests. A burglar is an emergency, and should be met half way, so to speak. An emergency must be dealt with promptly. So must a burglar. The visit of a burglar is seldom a tea and toast soiree or a fashionable conversation in real life, whatever it may be on the modern stage!"

A civilian of New York, and, therefore, not an "ornament of a forceful profession," had a lively experience with a burglar which amply corroborates the official expert testimony as to the efficacy of a scream as a burglar scarer.

'Twas in the chilly, still night, and two young men, chumming in the same city bed room, were awakened by a prowler, who came into the room and began to take quiet observations with a dark lantern. There was no possibility of mistake as to the character of the invader. He was a bona fide burglar, to the tips of his soft, mosses felt shoes, and the gleam of his discreet dark lantern.

The two young men lay still as mice and watched the burglar. Finally one young man tried to reach for a revolver that was under the pillow. The other young man, who had a longer head and knew that this might irritate the burglar, gave his companion a violent pinch, as a warning to keep still. Like some other warnings, it had an opposite effect. He who was pinched let out a wild shriek of agony—and the burglar took to his heels, ran like a whitehead, tumbled downstairs, and was out scudding away in the shadow of the night before the first young man had time to get the revolver and to pepper away at the fleeing shadow from the hastily opened window.

"Resist the devil," says the Book of Good Advice, "and he will flee from you." Don't resist a burglar, a burglar of the breed best known to the police—he will resist you. He will make him flee from you. But yell, and in a great majority of instances—that is to say, if he be the most prevalent kind of burglar, a burglar of the breed best known to the police—he will be the worst scared man in your county, the borders of which he will be trying to reach by leaps and bounds before the echoes of your alarming alarmist voice have died away.

It should be noted in postscript that the alleged "burglar alarm" or "buzzer" is not regarded seriously by either burglars or police.

## A LITERARY LETTER.

(Continued from Page 17.)

whose works have nobly and joyously influenced the life of their own and succeeding ages. One is glad to see the term thus rescued from its customary narrow associations with titled aristocracy. But one's chief reflection on running one's eye over the list of authors to be included is upon the perennial vitality of a great writer, and the perennial demand for his work. For so many years, in some cases centuries, have these "noble authors" been giving us of their treasure, yet their treasure is as full as ever, and the crowd at its doors as great and as eager as of old. Why is this? What is there about these ever-living masterpieces that keeps them so young?

One may perhaps throw a sidelight on the question by returning a moment to "John Inglesant," and ask why it has happened that the Macmillan company has chosen it and not other equally notorious novels on its list for a classical reissue? Mr. Shorthouse describes his book, and rightly, as a "philosophical romance," yet it is as an "historical novel" that it will be generally classified, and it was probably as that that it made its name and won its large audience. Exter-

nally, indeed, it may be regarded as one of the pioneers of the costume romance; for Inglesant was "some time servant to King Charles I., and took part in the civil wars, and accidentally the book is largely occupied with old manor houses, popish plotters, astrologers, Jesuits, Italian adventurers and such accepted material of the so-called historical romance. During the twenty-two years that have elapsed since "John Inglesant" was published the world has been pressed for room to contain all the historical novels that have been written. Many of these have been gallant, picturesque affairs. Their authors have shown no little skill in inventing plots and in devising breathless situations, but, outside one or two of Mr. Stanley Weyman's books, what remains of all this prodigious output? Has one single book been added to what one might call the shelf of probationary classics? It is easy to answer—not one. It is barely possible, indeed, to remember the titles of even the most reverberating. Here and there the stage keeps a title for a little while longer before the public, but soon even in those cases the books will be swept along into the property room, together with the halberds and the helmets, and all the other gallant trumpery which has for awhile been once more in fashion, and which is about to take its turn of being out of fashion once again. And, talking of the dramatized novel, one wonders why "John Inglesant" has never found its way into the stage. The stage, for its part, is a veritable parts it has the making of an excellent "historical" melodrama. Doubtless, the very suggestion would be painful to Mr. Shorthouse, and no writer in spiritual to ignore the financial consideration but would shrink from having the merely external frame of his book masquerade before the footlights—while its finer essence escaped like the soul of a murdered man. And, of course, it is just that "finer essence" in "John Inglesant," its superlative "romance," that still keeps it alive. Compared with the skilled manufacturer of the modern historical novel, Mr. Shorthouse is a mere baby in all the details of plot, construction and incident. The sensational elements of his plot are almost puerile in their conventionality, the general machinery is almost quaintly cumbersome, and his interest in what happens is of the mildest, and the course of events is innocently transparent. Any third rate historical romance could have made a better job of the story—as story. But, as so often happens with long-lived books, the comparative insignificance of the "story" in "John Inglesant" is unimportant; and on a re-reading it gives itself still a living book, in spite of every drawback and limitation—by virtue of the sweet and serious temper which pervades it, like the frail, half-mooned moon, which shines in the night sky. Inglesant was so devoted an amateur. "John Inglesant" is a book with an atmosphere—an atmosphere of rare spiritual refinement, and at the same time with the suggestion in it of spiritual adventure. The book, indeed, is a story of spiritual adventure, told in terms of seventeenth century "romance," and as such is rich in noble sensations. I know only one other modern book which possesses a similar atmosphere of pure yet romantic religious feeling, a book, of course, much its superior, namely, Pater's "Marius the Epicurean." Both books are romances of the spirit, the adventures in such are adventures of the soul. But Pater, of course, was an original master of English prose, and Mr. Shorthouse's unobtrusive manner of writing almost as little accounts for the impression his book continues to make on one as the external conduct of his story. In vain we examine page after page, and this passage and the other, to find the secret of the book's charm, the hiding place of its subtle spiritual perfume. Yet somehow the charm is there, by some untraceable means, life has been breathed into these unpretentious words. The only explanation is Mr. Carman's—"the man behind the book." Mr. Shorthouse has meditated on high matters, in a serious, exalted spirit; his thoughts have dwelt in holy places, and when he comes to set them on paper, the plain words, unconsciously to his writer, marshal themselves to the inner music of his meditation and breathe a like purity of tone. There is a mystery about pen and ink, and the subtle way they convey and betray the truth about a writer, which he as little as anyone understands.

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### HER EXCUSE.

(Chicago Post.)

"Didn't I see that young man with his arm around you?"

"Yes, but we were just practicing the position for the waltz."

"Don't you know that?"

"Well, yes, I suppose I do; but I wanted to be sure."

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January 1, 1903.

### ASSETS.

Bonds and mortgages, .....	\$10,996,953 27
Real Estate, .....	11,863,588 51
R. R. Bonds and Stocks (market value), .....	18,621,442 50
Municipal Bonds (Market Value), ..	5,737,301 95
U. S. Gov. Bonds (Market Value), ..	109,000 00
Cash in Banks and Office, .....	4,916,069 51
Interest and Rents, due and accrued, .....	384,521 34
Loans on Collateral Securities, ...	4,736,750 00
Loans on Policies, .....	1,066,916 83
Premiums Deferred and in course of collection (net), .....	1,812,795 96
Total, .....	\$60,245,339 87

### LIABILITIES.

Reserve on Policies, .....	\$49,800,630 00
All other Liabilities, .....	923,304 54
Surplus to Policy-holders, .....	9,521,405 33
Total, .....	\$60,245,339 87

LIFE INSURANCE ISSUED AND PAID FOR during 1902, }  
including Ordinary Insurance (\$87,000,000), over . . . } **272 MILLIONS**

ASSETS, end of 1902, over . . . . . **60 MILLIONS**

INCOME, during 1902, over . . . . . **33 MILLIONS**

PAID POLICY HOLDERS, during 1902, over . . . . . **9 MILLIONS**

SURPLUS, over . . . . . **9 MILLIONS**

POLICIES IN FORCE, nearly . . . . . **5 MILLIONS**

INCREASE IN PAID-FOR INSURANCE IN FORCE, over . . . . . **108 MILLIONS**

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**Paid-for Insurance in Force over 800 Millions**

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